

Recipes For a Cleaner Backyard

Safe and simple household products means a healthier family and a cleaner Puget Sound.



Ingredients

All of the ingredients in this book can be found at a local supermarket or drugstore. A majority of these items are commonly stored in most households on a regular basis, making these recipes not only cost-effective but convenient as well.

Baking Soda: Acts as an abrasive for scrubbing. Reacts with water, vinegar and lemon by oxidizing which helps break down grime. Also deodorizes.

Borax: (A mineral/salt compound) Disinfects, removes stains, deodorizes. A common brand is 20 Mule Team and can be found in the detergent aisle.

Ingredients

White Vinegar: Disinfects and breaks up dirt. White is the best choice of vinegars because it is uncolored. Also sets colors and softens fabric.

Hydrogen Peroxide: Disinfects and bleaches.

Lemons/Lemon Juice: Cuts grease and oils. Also smells nice.

Olive Oil: Picks up dirt and polishes wood.

Liquid Castile Soap: Non-petroleum all purpose cleaner. A common brand is Dr. Bronner's.

Ingredients

Salt: An abrasive that dissolves easily in water. Dissolved salt solutions cause chemical reactions like the one that allows tarnish to cling to aluminum foil.

Cornstarch: Deodorizes and removes grease stains. Cornstarch's fine and silky texture makes it the best choice for carpet cleaning.

Suggested Equipment

- * Cotton Rags - Old t-shirts work well.
- * Newspaper
- * 32oz Spray Bottle
- * 5 gallon Bucket
- * Vacuum Cleaner
- * Tea Kettle
- * Measuring Cups
- * Mop
- * Squeegee
- * Scouring Pad
- * Containers - For storing pre-made cleaners.

All Purpose Cleaner

- * 1/2 Cup Borax
- * 1 gallon hot water

Mix in a bucket or sink and make sure the borax becomes completely dissolved. For use in a spray bottle mix 1/8 cup borax with a full quart of hot water. Shake bottle before each use. After use, wipe the area with a clean rag to avoid any residue.



All Purpose Cleaner

- * Liquid Castile Soap

For spots on woodwork, tile, and linoleum, add a few drops of liquid soap to a wet rag and rub surface briskly. Rinse and wipe thoroughly to avoid leaving any streaks.



Countertop Cleaner

Marble Counters

- * 1 TBSP Liquid Castile Soap

Mix castile soap with a quart of warm water. Wash counters, rinse well and dry with a cloth.

Other surfaces

- * Halved Lemon
- * Baking Soda

Dip the cut end of the lemon in baking soda and use to scrub off residue or stains. Rinse with warm water.



Floor Cleaner

- * 1/2 cup White Vinegar
- * Water

Add vinegar to a five gallon bucket of warm water. Mop floor and dry with an old rag if necessary. The vinegar will smell until the floor has completely dried.



For **hardwood**: you may use this recipe or add a few drops of lemon juice and a spoon full of olive oil to hot water in a spray bottle for scratches or polishing. Hardwood should be dried immediately after cleaning.

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner

- * Cornstarch
- * Borax

Sprinkle on a mixture of 2 parts cornstarch and 1 part borax, let sit for one hour then vacuum the area. * To make carpets shine, sprinkle cleaned area with table salt, let sit for thirty minutes then vacuum.



For **Spills**: Sponge the area with vinegar and water then sponge it clean with just water.

Oven Cleaner

- * 1 Cup Baking Soda

Mix baking soda with enough water to make a paste. Apply to inside of oven; let stand about 15 minutes. Use a scouring pad to scrub. A butter knife is useful for baked on foods.



* This recipe requires more scrubbing effort but is non-toxic. Commercial oven cleaners can cause severe irritation or respiratory conditions. Not to be used on self-cleaning ovens.

Dishwasher Detergent

- * 1¹/₂ TBSP Baking Soda
- * 2 TBSP Borax

Measure both the baking soda and the borax into the detergent dispenser. A TBSP of vinegar may be added for the rinse cycle in a second dispenser.



* Running 1 cup of baking soda through an empty dishwasher's rinse cycle will remove grease and grime build-up.

Drain Cleaner

- * 1/2 Cup Baking Soda
- * 1/2 Cup White Vinegar
- * Boiling Water

Pour Baking Soda down the drain followed by the vinegar. Let it fizz for a minute then pour a kettle full of boiling water down. Repeat as necessary.



- * If there is hair clogging the drain the only way to get it out is by using a plastic snake which can be found at any hardware store.
- * Orange or Lemon Rinds can be put down garbage disposals to freshen any odors.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- * Liquid Castile Soap
- * Baking Soda

Sprinkle baking soda inside the bowl. Add a couple drops of castile soap over the powder. Scrub with a toilet brush and flush the toilet to remove residue. The same mixture may be used to clean the outside of the toilet as well. For gentle or in-between cleaning castile soap may work alone.



Tub & Sink Cleaner

- * Baking Soda
- * Liquid Castile Soap

Sprinkle baking soda on porcelain and rub with a wet rag. A few drops of castile soap can be added for tough stains. Rinse well to avoid leaving any filmy residue.



Window & Mirror Cleaner

- * 1/4 cup White Vinegar
- * Water
- * Crumpled Newspaper

Put vinegar into spray bottle and fill with water. Shake bottle and spray directly on surface. Rub with an old rag or crumpled newspaper.



For outdoors: use warm water, a few drops of castile soap and a sponge. Rinse well and use a squeegee to avoid streaks.

Laundry Detergent

- * 1 oz Liquid Castile Soap
- * 1/2 Cup Borax
- * 1/4 White Vinegar or Baking Soda

Use the castile soap as a base. Combine with borax and use in the machine's dispenser. Vinegar or Baking Soda can be used in the fabric softener dispenser, both of which help break down detergents and are great for sensitive skin.



* More castile soap can be used depending on load size and preference. For a safer bleach, soak clothes in 1 part hydrogen peroxide, 8 parts water. Rinse well before washing.

Metal Cleaner & Polish

- Copper and Brass**
 - * 2 TBSP Salt
 - * White Vinegar

Add enough vinegar to the salt to make a paste. Rub with a rag until polished. Flour may be added to reduce abrasiveness. * Do Not Use on Lacquered Metal.

- Silver**
 - Mix equal parts salt and vinegar in an aluminum foil lined container and soak silver pieces.



- Stainless Steel**
 - * Baking Soda
 - * White Vinegar
- Apply baking soda with damp rag, using the vinegar to eliminate spots.